



La Belle Époque
[1871-1914]

“The Beautiful Era”

*Called “The Gilded Age” in
the U.S.*

*Called “Victorian/
Edwardian” Era in Britain*



Characteristics of La Belle Époque

1. Materialism-Ch.23

- Higher standard of living
- Development “zones”
 - Inner Zone-most developed → Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, N.Italy, W.Austria
 - Outer Zone-not as developed → Ireland, Spain, Portugal (Iberian Peninsula, most of Italy, Europe east of Germany
 - Underdeveloped Zone → Africa and Asia



Characteristics of La Belle Époque

CH 23

2. Increased European Population
3. Growth of Cities & Urban Life
4. Migration from Europe
 - 1850-1940 → 60 million left Europe
 - Went to → US, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Australia/N. Zeal.
5. “Second” Industrial Revolution
 - Steam → electricity
 - Internal combustion & diesel engines.
 - Cars, planes, submarines.



Characteristics of La Belle Époque. Ch 23

5. “Second” Industrial Revolution
Britain → “The World’s Industrial Workshop”
 - Corporations → limited liability of investments.
 - Mass production.
6. Free Trade [esp. in England]
7. World Markets [Global Economy]
8. Advance of Democracy
 - Extension of the vote to the working class.
 - Creating a “welfare state.”



Characteristics of La Belle Époque

9. The Appeal of Socialism

- By the 1880s, most socialist parties were Marxist [esp. Ger. & Fr.]
- Not very successful in England.

10. Faith in Science Alone

- Science at the core of industrialization.
- “New Wonders” of daily life.
- Charles Darwin-Ch.22
 - *Origin of Species* [1859]
 - “survival of the fittest”



Characteristics of La Belle Époque=Ch. 24

10. Faith in Science Alone [con't.]

- “Social Darwinism” → Herbert Spencer
- Eugenics-look up
- Newtonian Science turned on its head
 - Einstein → “Theory of Relativity”
→ nature & energy were separate & distinct.
 - Max Planck → Quantum Physics
 - Marie and Pierre Curie



Characteristics of La Belle Époque -Ch 24

10. Faith in Science Alone [con't.]

- Professionalization of “new” sciences [anthropology, archeaology, etc.]
 - Psychology
 - Sigmund Freud → psychoanalysis
 - *The Interpretation of Dreams* [1900]
 - The role of the unconscious [the id, ego, super ego].



Characteristics of La Belle Époque

11. New Trends in Philosophy

-Irrationalism

*Friedrich Nietzsche, Georges Sorel, Henri Bergson

11. Internal Religious Struggles

- Modernists vs. Fundamentalists Pg 728



Characteristics of La Belle Époque-Ch. 24

13. Anti-Semitism

- Dreyfus Affair
- Theodore Herzl → *Der Judenstaat* [*The Jewish State*], 1896
 - “Father of Modern Zionism”

14. Women's Movement

- Emmeline Pankhurst

15. The “New” Imperialism

16. Militarism → glorification of war

17. Impressionism